

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
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S.B. 1708
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Criminal Justice
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As Filed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

The FBI estimates that over 100,000 children in the United States are being exploited by the human trafficking industry annually. Sex trafficking victims who are minors are like no other crime victims because of the intense trauma these victims incur.

These victims need comprehensive, wrap-around services that include immediate medical care and services upon rescue. Currently, there is no statewide organization or government office that provides sexually exploited minors with the comprehensive care and services these victims need.

S.B. 1708 provides victims with a single point of contact to assist them in finding appropriate services, by creating a program that assigns a caseworker to a sex trafficking victim to immediately start working with known service providers in the victim's area to create a customized package of services to fit the victim's immediate and long-term needs.

As proposed, S.B. 1708 amends current law relating to the creation of a governor's program for victims of child sex trafficking.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Chapter 772, Government Code, by adding Section 772.0063, as follows:

Sec. 772.0063. GOVERNOR'S PROGRAM FOR VICTIMS OF CHILD SEX TRAFFICKING. (a) Requires the governor of the State of Texas (governor) to establish and implement a program to provide comprehensive, individualized services to address the rehabilitation and treatment needs of child victims of an offense under Section 20A.02(a)(7) (providing that a person commits an offense if the person knowingly traffics a child and by any means causes the trafficked child to engage in, or become the victim of, conduct prohibited by certain enumerated offenses) or (8) (providing that a person commits an offense if the person knowingly receives a benefit from participating in a venture that involves an activity described by Subdivision (7) or engages in sexual conduct with a child trafficked in the manner described by Subdivision (7)), Penal Code.

(b) Requires the governor to appoint a director of the program to serve at the pleasure of the governor.

(c) Requires the director of the program to coordinate with state and local law enforcement agencies, state agencies, and service providers to identify victims of child sex trafficking who are eligible to receive services under the program.

(d) Requires that the program, for each victim of child sex trafficking identified by the director, immediately facilitate the assignment of a caseworker to the victim to coordinate with local service providers to create a customized package of services to fit the victim's immediate and long-term rehabilitation and treatment

needs. Requires that services provided under the program address all aspects of the medical, psychiatric, psychological, safety, and housing needs of victims.

SECTION 2. Requires the governor to establish the governor's program for victims of child sex trafficking and appoint a director of the program, as required by Section 772.0063, Government Code, as added by this Act, as soon as practicable and not later than December 1, 2016.

SECTION 3. Effective date: September 1, 2015.